

week ago, when they buried a young Haitian soldier from my district who was one of the two men who were kidnapped and murdered. So we have fought in all the wars.

We hear people say that there should be a vote in Congress regarding sending 2,000 troops to Liberia. We have not heard that for the Colombians or for Panama. We did not hear that where the President is attempting to go into the Philippines now. Is there a different standard for Africa? Is it that 435 Members must get up and talk about 2,000 troops going into a country that we founded, that we colonized, that we have close ties with, that asked us to come so that the fighting will cease, and that other African countries will be there at our side? Is there a double standard? I hope not.

We have had failures before. There was a failure in Somalia. That did not mean we should no longer then go in on humanitarian issues. I hope this President and administration will have the same standard as we have had throughout this world, whether it was in Panama, whether it was in Colombia, whether it was in the Philippines, whether it is in places like even Haiti, where we went and were not asked to come. I hope that we will send those few peacekeepers, 2,000, to go in and lead the ECOWAS troops so that the cholera can stop, the children can stop dying, and the women can stop dying. They are asking us to come in. I think we have an obligation and a responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to present this Special Order to the House.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 438, TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ACT OF 2003

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-189) on the resolution (H. Res. 309) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 438), to increase the amount of student loans that may be forgiven for teachers in mathematics, science, and special education, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2211, READY TO TEACH ACT OF 2003

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-190) on the resolution (H. Res. 310) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2211) to reauthorize title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON H.R. 2657, LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-191) on the bill (H.R. 2657) making appropriations for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

REPORT ON H.R. 2660, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-192) on the bill (H.R. 2660) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

COLOMBIA AND THE ANDEAN INITIATIVE ON NARCOTICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order this evening.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

THE STATE OF AFRICA

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the distinguished gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) for his kindness, because I am joining the Congressional Black Caucus in their Special Order regarding the State of Africa.

It is this time, Mr. Speaker, that many of us have come to the floor of the House to discuss foreign policy issues that have great concern to us, and I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for his leadership over the years as the chairman and

ranking member of the Subcommittee on Africa on the Committee on International Relations, and for his leadership and consciousness about the continent of Africa. Likewise, let me thank the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus for his wisdom in having us be pointed this evening, pointedly speaking about these very vital issues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise on this floor tonight to speak globally about what the continent represents to the United States of America. Besides the historical perspective of Africa's desire to be an ally and a friend with the United States over the years, throughout the 20th century, from World War I to World War II, it should be known that after 9/11, as many of us were quite aware of, some of the loudest voices in opposition to the horrific incidents that occurred in New York on 9/11, in Washington, and in Pennsylvania was the continent of Africa. Their voices were those of support of the United States in our fight in the war against terrorism. So this bond with Africa and the United States is deep, it is strong, and it needs to be further cultivated.

Clearly, President Clinton established one of the strongest bonds in his long and extended visit just about 4 years ago. It was a visit to not only develop friendships, but to develop economic partnerships in the fight against HIV/AIDS. So I rise today to say that this momentum has not been carried forward, and it disturbs me that we are now debating why a friendship with Africa; why the intrusion, if you will, or the assistance in the issue of Liberia. Why? Because there are 700 million individuals, and that number is growing, who desire a strong and related friendship.

I am very impressed with the Global Business Council, headed by Ambassador Holbrooke, that brought together businesses from the private sector to fight the devastation of HIV/AIDS. I think it is important for Americans to be aware of the fact that so goes the continent of Africa, so goes many of the issues here in the United States. Of the 42 million people infected worldwide, over half, 29 million of them, live in sub-Saharan Africa. Also a higher proportion of women are living with HIV infections or suffering from AIDS than men in Africa. As of 2002, women in sub-Saharan Africa represent more than half, approximately 58 percent, of all adults living with HIV/AIDS.

We can applaud the work that has been done here in this country, as I said, with the Global Business Council; also with the work in this Congress, where we passed legislation in a bipartisan manner to give \$15 billion in aid, as well supporting the Millennium Fund to help in our fight against HIV/AIDS and to help in Africa. But it cannot be continued if we do not embrace the momentum and embrace it in a collaborative way. The President needs to

consult with the members of the Congressional Black Caucus and the African American community and others on policies dealing with Africa.

It is sad that on this trip we have not found an opportunity to collaborate and not recognize the voices being raised in the media proclaiming that Africa is a strategic partner. So I rise today to be able to reinforce the fact that we are stakeholders in the continent of Africa. One of the largest oil-producing nations is Nigeria, and just a week ago I hosted the chairman of OPEC, the distinguished chairman from Qatar, who responded that Nigeria and Africa is a very vital partner, just as Iraq is an important partner, as relates to oil production in the world.

There was no hesitancy, no question of whether there should be a vote as related to going into Iraq. And now, not recognizing or maybe failing to recognize the strategic relationship we should have with the continent, and particularly Liberia, there seems to be some debate. I happened to have been one who opposed the war in Iraq, and I can distinguish this. I would hope these troops would be peacekeeping. I would hope they would be a collaboration with the United Nations. I would hope they would be a collaboration with African troops. And I would hope we would recognize that Liberia has asked for us to come.

So I think it is important, Mr. Speaker, as we discuss the state of Africa that we discuss and say that Africa has had many successes; that we have seen the growth in Nigeria. We understand their stock exchange gives a 30 percent recovery on investments. We have heard from the President of Botswana just a few weeks ago speak about democratization and stability, and that country has been a stable government for more than 25 years.

We realize we have work to do, and that means to help them fight in the war against terrorism, help them fight in the war against HIV/AIDS, and help them fight, as our distinguished colleague in Rome, Eva Clayton, has said, help them fight with the issues of food and nutrition. And, yes, we must help Africa build its growth and its opportunities for jobs and give resources for the young people who want to be educated.

There is much that we can do as partners with Africa. Let us not stand a distance back while many are slaughtered and ask the question, why Africa? I would hesitate to say, Mr. Speaker, that it should not be a question of race, whether or not Africa happens to be a continent that is filled with Africans, people of color, black people. I hope that is not the dividing line that gives us reason to question when we ran without being invited to Iraq.

So I hope that as we look at this, and I thank the distinguished gentleman once again as I close, let me just simply say the state of Africa is good, it is a partner, it is a friend. And I would only hope that we look at Africa in our

fight on the war against terrorism, in our fight, of course, for the opportunities to fight against HIV/AIDS, and, yes, to fight for peace and stability, and, of course, Mr. Speaker, to be able to say that Africa is our friend because it has stood with us. It is now time for us to stand with Africa and as well to stand with it as it fights for peace and stability for its people.

I thank the distinguished gentleman for his kindness.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman ELIJAH CUMMINGS, Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, for calling this special order to discuss the very important issues that are facing Africa. The most perilous of those issues is the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The HIV/AIDS pandemic has claimed more than 28 million lives in Africa. Current estimates suggest that 42 million are living with HIV in Africa.

Sadly, as a region, Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest number of individuals living with HIV/AIDS in the world. Of the 42 million people infected worldwide, over half 29 million of them live in Sub-Saharan Africa. Also, higher proportions of women are living with HIV infection or suffering from AIDS than men. As of 2002, women in Sub-Saharan Africa represented more than half, approximately 58% of all adults living with HIV/AIDS. The infection rate is particularly high among young girls.

In some African nations, infection rates are five times higher in young women than young men. What is more, AIDS now ranks as the number one cause of death in Africa and the fourth leading cause of death globally. These numbers are staggering and should strike a nerve in you each time you hear them. However, these facts should constantly be reiterated in order to emphasize the dire situation that Africa is in today.

We must recognize that AIDS is not only a threat to the health of populations; it is a threat to the social, economic, and political stability of nations as a whole. In the past, what we had failed to do, particularly in Africa, was to chart a plan of action to address HIV/AIDS as a social crisis that affects all spheres of everyday life. Now we have allocated funds to provide for the prevention of the disease in Africa. Now is the time for a targeted response that aims to address the multiplicative effects of HIV/AIDS in each sector. This includes making sure that young girls have access to educational opportunities and trying to develop methods by which women do not have to rely on their husbands for their economic stability. It is time to stop placing old bandages on fresh wounds and to begin the process of healing our beloved Africa.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN LIBERIA

Mr. Speaker, another great challenge facing the continent of Africa is armed conflict. Clearly, many countries have the need for effective conflict resolution. Liberia is one of the countries. It is on the front page of our paper and it should be at the front of our minds.

Liberia was founded during the nineteenth century by freed American slaves. Once a nation founded on the premises of freedom and opportunity, the Liberia of today is wrought with political upheaval and social unrest. Liberia has been the site of intense devastation and profound loss due to years of civil war. The latest war has lasted for approximately three years and has caused immense disruption

to the social and political fabric of the region.

The health infrastructure in Liberia has crumbled, schools have become refugee camps, and people have taken the law into their own hands. Nearly half of the Liberian population has been forced to flee to neighboring countries or to internationally assisted refugee camps in Liberia. Large numbers of innocent, young children are being made into child soldiers. Those children that are able to escape the life of forced military service are often left with little to no options aside from living on the streets. This conflict has brought about political destabilization on a mass scale, increased economic disparity, and what can only be described as societal chaos. And although a cease fire was recently agreed upon, fighting and civil disobedience within the country has yet to subside.

The United States has had a long historical relationship with Liberia dating back to its original founding. Liberia has served as an important ally for the U.S. particularly during the Cold War era. It is in recognition of this longstanding relationship that the U.S. should serve as a vigilant presence in the efforts to bring calm and civility to this war ravaged country.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) should work diligently to ensure that the basic human rights of those seeking refuge from the war in Liberia are preserved at all costs. A consistent supply of humanitarian aid in the form of shelter, food, water, and medical care should be supplied to the region as well. We must do all we can to ensure that peace and stability return to Liberia.

TRADE AND ECONOMIC INVESTMENT

On the matter of economic development, Africa is a continent rich with some of the most sought after natural resources in the world. Yet, this region has not been able to use its natural resources for activities that will stimulate growth in domestic economies and generate increases in national profit. Mr. Speaker, to create a stable Africa we need to promote the competitiveness of African goods and services. We need to create avenues by which these products can become profitable in the global market economy.

Mechanisms need to be established to promote increased working partnerships between U.S. and African businesses and organizations. Ideally, these initiatives should be directly targeted through existing trade and investment programs like the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) but other possibilities also exist. Established in 2000, AGOA offers tangible incentives for African nations to continue their efforts to open their economies and create free markets. If we hope to encourage our partners in Africa to strive for economic strength, then we need to ensure that they receive the training necessary to comply with the rules and regulations of both AGOA and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Finally, in regions where conflict and civil war have decimated local economies, efforts should be made to provide the necessary technical assistance to help troubled African states, like Liberia and Sudan, transition out of conflict by fostering feasible economic activities that may ultimately lead to effective resolutions.

□ 2115

COLOMBIA

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, tonight's Special Order is going to be on Colombia in particular and the Andean Initiative on Narcotics. I appreciate the gentlewoman's assistance over the years and having gone on a Codel with us down in the Caribbean last summer when we worked on the narcotics issue, and while we may have nuances of differences on the African question, Members are aware we cannot have superficial involvement in any area of the world anymore; and Africa is, indeed, a key area.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS), chairman of the Committee on Government Reform, and myself as chairman of the Subcommittee on Drug Policy and the co-chair the Speaker's Drug Task Force and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) just returned yesterday from Colombia, and I would at this time yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN).

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) mentioned, this past weekend I had the pleasure of going to Colombia by invitation of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS). I am a member of the Speaker's Drug Task Force, and we are going to celebrate the third anniversary of the Colombia Plan. We have spent a lot of money in Colombia; and we have tried to thwart the growing production and distribution of drugs, primarily heroin and cocaine. I really wanted to see firsthand if we were being effective, if we were spending our money wisely.

What I saw was beyond my expectation. I think we are doing very, very well in that area. The Colombians, with our help, are working very hard to eliminate the illegal drug production. They do this by spraying, by intercepting drugs by land, sea and air, and are actively breaking up drug laboratories, places of production.

I had an opportunity to ride in the boats that they use to intercept the drug traffic on the high seas. These are little speed boats. They will basically be watching the radar and they will see a little blip. They run out and jump in the boat and race out and intercept the ship, the boat, whatever. We had an opportunity to do this, and it was a lot of fun to see these guys in action, and they did a great job. I was very, very impressed with their professionalism and the fact that they were doing such a good job. And yet after we left, after the Americans left, the Colombians were there and went about their business. Since then, they have intercepted trafficking in cocaine, heroin, whatever.

The Colombians are fighting this battle. Certainly we are providing some help and resources. We were able while I was there to go to a Colombian hospital and see some of the soldiers that had been injured in the last few weeks.

One of them had lost a leg. One of them had shrapnel blow up in his face and lost an eye and part of his face. But their spirits were high. The young man that lost his leg was talking about going ahead and trying to remain in the military and continue to fight the battle.

So the Colombians are making great headway. They are taking back their country from the terrorists and thugs that are financing this effort by kidnapping their own people and ransoming them and producing illegal drugs. I think what I like about the way that the Colombian Plan is structured is in the sense we have an exit strategy. We are providing a lot of resources, a lot of know-how, but the Colombians have done a tremendous job of picking up on that.

I have a good friend that is an ophthalmologist, an eye doctor; and he will go to Africa and he will work on the natives and do cataract surgery and glaucoma surgery. And while he is there, he will help a lot of people; but where he really helps is while he is there, he teaches the surgeons there how to do the procedures so when he leaves, the surgeons that are there go on about their business and continue to care for people, continue to do a good job.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) for asking me to go on the trip. I appreciate the gentleman's leadership in this area, and I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTER) for taking on this scourge that is a problem to America and so many other places in the world. I really feel like the Colombia Plan is doing just what we want it to do.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and thank him for his leadership in the meth issue. I know that is very important in northwest Arkansas. We are trying to work out doing a hearing on a new initiative on that possibly next week partly because of the gentleman's leadership in encouraging us to do that. We are all trying to deal with cocaine and heroin, meth, and Oxycotin hitting our districts.

Mr. Speaker, let me put this in context. From the world map, Members can see South America just south of the United States. Panama is connected to Colombia, and at one time in the Andean countries, which include Peru and Bolivia straight south of Colombia, that was at one point nearly 100 percent of the world's coca production and a large percentage of the heroin production. The other parts of the world that heroin is predominantly coming from, a little bit from Mexico and a little from the Golden Triangle, that is still significant in Afghanistan and that region kind of northwest or to the left of India, the far part of the map, that Hamas and Hezbollah are using to finance their efforts. Most of the heroin on that side of the world is flowing to China and Europe. But all of the coca in the world is coming out of

this region. At one point it was fairly evenly split between Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia with Colombia being mostly a processing country; but it is increasingly concentrated in Colombia, taking one of South America's oldest democracies and turning it into a battle zone.

One other thing we can see from this is why we have a Plan Colombia and an Andean Initiative. If we look at that as a funnel, as it comes out of Colombia, if we do not get it when it is being grown and it gets to the border, it can go to the north side of Colombia into the Atlantic or to the southwest side of Colombia into the Pacific. Once it gets up to the United States border, it becomes even harder to stop. Or it can go across the Atlantic Ocean to Europe, across the Pacific Ocean to Asia, and the farther one gets from the actual poppy and coca fields, the harder it becomes, which is why we have dedicated and made Colombia the third largest recipient of foreign aid in the United States behind Israel and Egypt because the drug problem in the world right now is centered in that zone; and if we cannot tackle it there, it becomes far more expensive and far harder to tackle the problem as it moves out of Colombia.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER), who has been leading an effort for Members of Congress to learn Spanish. The gentleman has taken an aggressive interest in that region along with the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BALLENGER), the subcommittee chairman.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) and commend the gentleman for his leadership and efforts to eradicate the threat of narcotics coming onto American soil. I commend and am thrilled to participate tonight in this Special Order.

Imagine this here in the United States, if our judges were assassinated, our candidates for Congress, our candidates for President were threatened with kidnapping and assassination. Imagine if our elected officials were threatened and ordered to resign their positions at gunpoint, and this threat emerged from narcotraffickers here in the United States. Imagine how the American people would feel about the need to deal with this threat to our democracy and such a threat to our Nation's security.

Well, the people of Colombia have been threatened with these types of threats for decades where you have narcoterrorists organize military groups, in fact three groups, two left wing, one right wing, who are funded through the trafficking of narcotics, cocaine and other drugs. And, of course, they threaten something we hold very dear, which is freedom and democracy.

Mr. Speaker, Colombia is a wonderful country. It is a country of great history, great heritage; and today its democracy is threatened at gunpoint by

those who make their means through the trafficking and production of narcotics.

I support Plan Colombia. I support President Bush's Andean Regional Initiative. Colombia is important to the United States. Not only does Colombia share our values of freedom and opportunity and free enterprise, but Colombia is an important partner in the western hemisphere for the United States. It is a trading and economic partner. We share a culture and heritage. Latin America is important to us, and Colombia is an important part of Latin America. Colombia continues and has always been a strong ally and friend of the United States. It is a significant U.S. trading partner and supplier of oil.

In fact, Colombia, as I noted, is today the longest-standing democracy in Latin America, and it is currently under siege by a number of guerrilla and paramilitary groups that we in the United States have designated as terrorist organizations, designated terrorist organizations by the United States Government. These terrorist groups today obtain their primary means and monetary support by the destructive drug trade.

Unfortunately, our friends in Colombia suffer from this; and today Colombia serves as a source of 90 percent of the cocaine and a majority of the heroin found on the streets of America, significantly contributing to the 19,000 drug-induced deaths in the United States each year. And many of those 19,000 drug-induced deaths here in the United States are children, kids in our home communities back in Illinois and Indiana and Arkansas and all 50 of our great States.

Today, Congress needs to support Plan Colombia. We also need to support President Bush's Andean Regional Initiative, legislation that recognizes the importance of Colombia. Today, as we approach the 3-year anniversary of Plan Colombia, it is important tonight to review the progress being made by the United States' support for the freely elected government of Colombia.

I am proud to say and pleased to say that our support of Plan Colombia has given us positive results that we can point to. In fact, there are many strong indicators that Plan Colombia and the Andean Regional Initiative programs are beginning to bear fruit.

Eradication of coca plants has led to major decreases in cocaine production, and purity of the drug has dropped as well. Law enforcement efforts have led to increased seizures on land and sea. Extraditions of drug traffickers to the United States is at an all-time high, and I note something that is so important for us, and that is the professionalism and the performance and the human rights record of Colombia's armed forces, and in particular that the counterdrug battalions and the Colombian National Police have shown tremendous improvement, as well as getting results.

□ 2130

I would also note that alternative economic development programs are also beginning to show great promise, and utilization of expanded authorities are being fully leveraged by our friends in Colombia to more effectively attack both drugs and terrorism. These are positive things that we can report happening right now today in Colombia, and there are many others. But the job is not done yet, and that is why we stand here tonight to continue our support for Plan Colombia as well as the Andean Regional Initiative. Plan Colombia and the Andean Regional Initiative has put Colombia on the road to success, but as I noted, the road is long, and we must continue to support Plan Colombia.

I would note that Colombia today is in much better position to win this fight against narcoterrorism than they were 3 years ago, not only because of U.S. support, but also because of Colombia's freely elected, democratically elected President Uribe. Since taking office in August of 2002, President Uribe has shown an unwavering commitment to achieving democratic security and has brought new hope to Colombia. He has acted quickly and decisively to address terrorism and narcotics trafficking while also promoting human rights. His national security strategy shows his determination to deny terrorists the drug-related resources they use to finance their operations against the people of Colombia. And President Uribe has made tough decisions necessary to improve Colombia's economic prospects, moving forward and ahead on tax, pension and labor reforms.

Overall President Uribe has energized Colombia, receiving high praise and high job-approval ratings from his own people, the Colombian people. No doubt with President Uribe's leadership, Colombia is on the right track to restoring security and prosperity, and we in Congress applaud Colombia's efforts of late and recognize the sacrifices that Colombian people have made over the last few decades.

Again, Colombia matters, Latin America matters, and I know there are meetings that will soon be held in Europe, and my hope is our friends in Europe will join the United States in supporting the people of Colombia and supporting the freely elected democratic Government of Colombia. And again, I note that no Latin American country has a longer history of democracy and freedom than Colombia. They are our friends. They are our allies. They stand with us in the values that we as Americans stand for, freedom and democracy and free enterprise. We in this Congress want to ensure that the people of Colombia continue to have freedom and opportunity, and that democracy grows and flowers and blooms, and that the people of Colombia have the opportunity to enjoy economic freedoms and free enterprise. So I would urge our European friends to

join with the United States in supporting Colombia in its war against terrorism and to support Colombia's war against narcoterrorism which is threatening democracy right in our own neighborhood.

I again thank the gentleman from Indiana for his leadership in the war against drugs which finances, and let us remember the primary source of terrorism in the Western Hemisphere is narcotrafficking. That is why his leadership is so important, my good friend from Indiana.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois, and as he knows, as a long-time close personal friend of the Speaker, from the State Legislature in Illinois, and since we have been to Congress that our Speaker has been a leader on this issue, and he asked us to do this Special Order tonight. He asked us to go last weekend down to Colombia and has stood firm in making sure that this initiative was funded, make sure that we stayed focused on the narcotics issue. And it is our appreciation for his leadership in addition to each of us trying to take responsibility and work to help solve these problems that are big. Whether it is the streets of Joliet, Illinois, or the streets of Fort Wayne, Indiana, and throughout the rural parts of his district and the rural parts of my district, we see that drug problem, along with alcohol, as being the number one problem of crime and breakup of families, the reason people lose jobs. It is a problem that is not only a world problem, but it is a problem back home where the people are talking about it at their dinner tables, they are talking about it with their kids hopefully, but they are certainly talking about the byproducts of illegal narcotics. So I thank him also for his leadership.

What I would like to do is lay a little bit further out how we got into the Andean Initiative and the Colombian problem, how some of it has evolved over the years here in Congress and with our funding, some of the primary questions that have been coming up often in the news media, but with my colleagues here in Congress and address some of the myths that have been plaguing us in these debates.

First, let me describe a little bit what our Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources Subcommittee was working with. When the Republicans took over Congress in 1995 and reformulated the committee that I now chair to focus on drug policy so we had one committee that pulled together oversight from what was 23 different committees looking at the narcotics problem, as we looked at this, we saw certain basic things that needed to be addressed. One was eradication. Two was interdiction. If we failed to eradicate it, we had to try to intercept it before it got to our borders. If it got inside the United States, we needed to do law enforcement, which explains the DEA, local police forces, State police. Then if we could tackle the problem at

either end through prevention or treatment, we could try to reduce the demand side, too.

So there were five prongs: Eradication, interdiction, enforcement, along with prevention and treatment. And in that part it became apparent that the Andean region and the Colombian region was most in danger because of the drug habits of the United States and particularly Western Europe.

Myth number one is that there is a civil war going on in Colombia. There is not a civil war going on in Colombia. The FARC as well as the ELN, and even counting the paramilitaries, we are talking about a percent of the population that is, quite frankly, less, far less, than the prison population in the United States. What we are basically talking about are terrorists and criminals who have not been captured. Some of them early on may have started with the revolutionary idea that they wanted power and did not want to get it through a democratic process.

We have already heard from my colleagues that this is the oldest Latin American democracy, that has had many stable elections. They have had a history of some violence for numerous geographical reasons and others, but so have we in the United States. So have we in other parts of Western Europe. But a few dissidents that are a tiny minority of a country do not constitute a civil war. It is a rebellion of people who want to take the law into their own hands.

Over time, as we had the ELN which used kidnapping as its main route, we saw the FARC, which was the largest of the groups, decide to finance themselves by providing first protection and then actually running the growing operations after some of the big cartels were broken up; the Medellin and the Cali cartels, for example. Then we saw communities try to form a contract with so-called paramilitaries. Sometimes they were former members of the military. Sometimes they dressed like military and they were really kind of like Pinkerton detectives on steroids, that people wanted to protect themselves, so they hired them. Pretty soon that group got corrupted as well by narcotics, at least much of them, whatever their original intention was, to protect themselves from others because they could not establish order in the community, and the government was not strong enough to do so or whatever. Now we have three groups, still a tiny percentage, maybe numbering 40,000 in a country of 28 million, a tiny percentage of the country. It does not constitute a civil war. Their motives are not civil war. Their motives are to make money on narcotics.

Some of them now would like to buy peace and get power without having to go through a democracy, but President Pastrana, who more than bent over backwards, who turned every cheek times three to try to negotiate with them and wound up with what? Nothing. He had the right motives. I and

others backed him in that effort to try to do that as we tried to rebuild and organize the Colombian military and the Colombian national police. But the bottom line is they did not want to come to the peace table. They are not interested in peace. They are terrorists, they are interested in selling narcotics, protecting narcotics and terrorizing villages.

We were sold to the United States Congress that Plan Colombia and the Andean Regional Initiative was going to be a joint effort, and while I have talked about the United States using the narcotics, the truth is we only consume about 50 to 60 percent of the cocaine production coming out of Colombia. Europe is consuming huge quantities of that, but also Canada, the region itself, and others, and Asia, because that is where they are getting their cocaine, and this should not all be the United States' problem. But some of the European countries and other countries who in the beginning promised huge amounts of dollars to help Colombia have not followed through. Their argument was they did not want to spend money on the military and law enforcement violations.

Okay. Let us accept that premise, which I do not think it was a very good premise, but let us accept that premise. Now as we are making progress in Colombia, and as villages are finally getting stabilized where people are again ready to be a judge or to be a mayor, where is Europe? Where are the alternative development dollars that they said were coming? Where is the help with setting up those law enforcement systems? If the United States has been willing to bear, along with Colombia, 100 percent of the burden even though 50 percent of the problem is not ours, and none of this basically is Colombia's, these groups would not be armed if it was not for drug abusers in the United States, and Western Europe, and Japan, and Canada and other places using cocaine and heroin.

We stimulated and funded the terrorism that is occurring in Colombia, the thousands of deaths, the police who are getting massacred, the individuals who are getting massacred. They are getting massacred with our money. It is our problem, not Colombia's problem. They need the help with it. Their people are using this. Their people are growing it. But they met our market demand. We have an obligation to help put order back and to help them reestablish their country.

The United States is helping Colombia, and Colombia has taken tremendous efforts, particularly under President Uribe, to go after the eradication, to go after the law enforcement, to get some stability in these areas. We need partners around the world now to follow through on their commitments, because if we cannot provide alternative development, if we cannot provide jobs, if we cannot make decent schools, if we cannot get a legal system that works with local police and mayors, we will

go back to chaos with our money, because we have been the drug abusers and we need allies around the world.

Let me step back again and illustrate. Earlier I talked about the funnel, and let me in particular here show one of the problems that we face in the United States before I get into some specifics. My subcommittee has been holding hearings on the borders in the north and south border. We just did a hearing in El Paso. We spent 3 days here in this region of Texas. We did a hearing over here in Sells. We have had a hearing over here at San Isidro. We did a hearing and visited multiple times in Nogales and the area of Douglas, Arizona.

Let me guarantee the Members something. If the American people are saying it is not working, and we are not getting it stopped in Colombia, let me assure the American people something. We cannot get control of that border, and this is the easiest border to control in the south. We have virtually no control over the water coming in from the Caribbean. We have had to pull our boats in for homeland security, but once they are coming in water and going up the coast, it has been very difficult in the Caribbean region. It is even worse in the Pacific. As they come in with little boats up the California coast and out into that water, it has been very difficult to intercept.

We have 1 million plus illegal immigrants making it across the border every year in the south border, 1 million. That is a huge number. Some of them are running small amounts. Most of them are not. But it shows how porous the border is. We have thousands of Border Patrol. We are doing everything we can to control that and will continue to try to close it, but as we start to close the border, let me tell the Members about a hearing we had here in the Tohono O'odham Reservation. That day while we were having a hearing, one person was interdicted. It is a town of maybe 2,500 on an Indian reserve, the Tohono O'odham. Their police did one seizure of 200 pounds, one seizure of 300 pounds, one seizure of 500 pounds, and one of 400 pounds; a total of 1,500 pounds in 1 day. Then seven SUVs went through later in the day, of which one got through, but they managed to catch a number of them. They found a hole in this zone. A National Park Ranger was killed in the Organ Pipe National Monument, and as we squeezed other parts of the border, they moved to that hole. This is important because the previous 3 months they had 1,500 pounds, the previous year they had 1,500 pounds, and in that day between 9 and 2 o'clock, they got 1,500 pounds even though we had Federal people around.

There is so much stuff moving across, we cannot even intercept it all, even though we keep boosting the number of Border Patrol people. We will continue to make the efforts because when that comes in, the two biggest cocaine busts in my district's history, or it appears

to be two of the biggest, if not the two biggest, occurred last 3 weeks in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

□ 2145

One of them came from Texas, and I believe the other through Arizona, and it was Colombian.

Now, as that moves through, it is not a theoretical exercise we are talking about here. When you are driving down the road at night and you do not know whether somebody is whacked out on coke or whether they have injected themselves with heroin or are high on this high-grade marijuana, that has nothing to do with the historic marijuana that you hear about from the sixties and the news media jokes about. That is not what we are talking about in marijuana. We are talking about THC content; in my hometown a lot of the marijuana is selling for more than coke and heroin. This stuff is potent.

Think about it. When you get behind the wheel, whether you want to legalize drugs and whether you think we should back off from the drug war, do you feel safe? Does your family feel safe, knowing that the more that pours across there, the cheaper it is, the more of it there is, the more you could be killed driving home or there could be a robbery at the bank where you get caught in the shoot-out, or watching neighborhoods in your communities get sucked under, or people operating a bus or truck or equipment as they are building, using this drug?

Harmless crime? Harmless drug? Balmoney. This is the biggest threat to the United States, 30,000 people dying because of illegal narcotics. We talk a lot, and I am on the Committee on Homeland Security, but the numbers we are looking at on an annual basis dwarf what we have seen yet.

Yes, one nuclear weapon and we could all be destroyed; but the fact is, while we are talking about that, we are watching people get killed every night. Tonight, in every city of the United States, somebody is going to be impacted. Maybe shot in some cities; in other cities it will be a dad or mom who use their money for drugs when they should have been supporting their family, or not being with their kids or abusing their kids or spouse abuse or not making their child support payments because they used it on illegal narcotics. Those are the real problems with that, and we are not going to be able to control, no matter how hard we try, enough of our borders; but we will improve that, but we have to get it at the source.

Now, let me deal with a couple of other questions. We heard a little bit from my colleagues about is it working? Let me start out with, first off, how do you define "working"? I constantly hear Members saying, well, there is still drugs.

Well, should we stand up when we deal with spouse abuse and say, you know, we funded spouse abuse last year and there is still spouse abuse. In fact,

we funded spouse abuse programs for the last 10 years, and there is still spouse abuse. In fact, we have tried to deal with spouse abuse ever since the American Republic was started, and there is still spouse abuse, so we should give up?

On child abuse, when we come down here on Labor-HHS later this week and talk about funding for child abuse, could you imagine if somebody stood up and said, well, you know, we have been fighting child abuse the last few years. We spent hundreds of millions of dollars over decades here, and there is still child abuse here in America.

Of course there is. There will always be drug abuse. The root problem in my opinion is sin. It may be different variations and different people have different problems; but every day, somebody is newly exposed to the temptations of narcotics, and no matter how much we try to prevent it, and treatment is after the fact, and treatment is very important and I am pretty much on most treatment bills that are moving through Congress, but the truth is, that is treating the wounded.

We cannot just treat the wounded; we have to get into prevention. But there is a funny thing about prevention. You can convince people they should stay off drugs, and then they break up with their girlfriend and go to a party and all of a sudden they forgot everything they learned in the drug prevention program. They lose their job. Somebody packages something more potent or they are smoking cigarettes or having a beer and somebody says you want a little bit bigger high? And all of a sudden, at the very least, they are psychologically addicted, if not physically addicted. New people are exposed by the minute and by the hour. It is not something that you can ever fully eliminate.

But we can control it. And we have made successes. Even though we had a surge between 1992 and 1994, of which we are only making a little progress, the truth was that its peak was at 1994.

Let me briefly mention another method. "Just Say No" does not work. Under Just Say No under the Reagan administration, we had 8 straight years of decline that carried through the first 2 to 3 years of the Bush administration, 11 years of decline.

In that 11 years of decline, it went down so far that even in the surge up in 1991 to 1994, in the last year of the Bush administration and the first two of the Clinton administration, where now we would have to have a 50 percent reduction to get back to Reagan, even that peak in the United States was less than the peak in 1980 before Just Say No. So it is a myth that Just Say No did not work. It worked, because it was not Just Say No. That was one part. We did treatment, we did interdiction, we did eradication where necessary, but we fought and we had a consensus of how to fight it.

When we lost the consensus, the problem "upped" again. Now we have

had a couple of years of success. But now they are better funded.

So among the things we are hearing about Colombia is, for example, everybody violates human rights. It is simply not true. There are degrees of violations of human rights, that human rights are not respected much at all by the FARC and the ELN. Kids are kidnapped, they use 14-year-olds in their military, they terrorize people. They do not respect human rights at all.

There have been problems with the paramilitaries, and the question is, are they too tied to the military? The answer is we have worked hard in this government. Uribe's government is committed to trying, for once and for all, to prosecute them all.

When you go and talk to the counter-narcotics brigades of the Defense Department, off to the side what they will tell you is literally when there is a firefight with the terrorists, they have to have an attorney there. They cannot move the bodies so they can identify and make sure they were not shot in the back, and they do things we do not do.

We are holding Colombia to a different standard even than the United States. Now, that is because we are putting money in. They have had a historic problem with human rights and there is an accountability with it.

But it is just wrong for anybody on this floor or anywhere in the world to imply that there has not been tremendous progress, that we have not vetted these brigades better than we have ever in the past, and there is not accountability, and that when you go to a Colombian military camp, their prisons will have a number of people in it who are being held for possible violations, something that is stricter than any other process we are doing; and it is important they have that, because if the American people are going to put the money in, they want to know we are doing human rights.

But we have been making progress and have made dramatic progress on human rights, and those who want to criticize the Colombian military and the government, I have asked people in my district too, sometimes they are criticizing what we do and sending our money down to violence. Why do they not criticize the FARC? Why do they not criticize the FARC? Why do they not criticize the ELN? Why is it always the government or the paramilitaries?

The FARC are the ones who started it, who have violations. I am not defending any human rights, but let us at least acknowledge that they are the primary perpetrators of human rights violations, that there is still violence, therefore the program has not worked because there is still violence in Colombia.

Yes, there is still violence. You know what? There is going to be violence for quite a while. They have got a lot of dollars from the American Government to work with. They can buy weapons. And one proof we are successful is they are getting more violent.

When we were down there, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BOOZMAN), and I this last weekend, we went to a hospital. There we talked to a bunch of young soldiers, basically 22- to 24-year-olds. One of the soldier's eyes was gone and his leg was gone; and he was in pretty bad shape, generally. A number of them were dead; he was in better shape than them.

They died because they were trying to eradicate the drugs Americans wanted to buy and Europeans wanted to buy. It was not predominantly Colombians who want to buy it. It was our money.

They were attacked from both sides. A number of them said it was the worst firefight they had ever been in. It was homemade bombs, screws coming at them, going into their eyes and their bodies. It was terrorist-type bombs, not traditional.

Now, they have traditional weapons too. For the first time we are seeing it looks like some arms-for-drugs shipments coming in from some of the arms negotiating sales places in Eastern Europe and some of the Mafia-type around it, not the traditional definition of the word, that are shipping arms in there.

We are going to see more sophisticated weapons. This myth that if we suddenly legalize this, that there would not be this conflict, oh, yeah. They are making \$3 billion a year; and if we say we are going to legalize something, forget a second that I do not want to be driving down the highway worried about whether somebody is whacked out on drugs.

Let us say it was not that. But they are going to suddenly give up? Are you going to legalize cocaine and heroin? Are you going to legalize whatever the next thing is? Of course not. They are not going to give up their market. They are going to continue to step people up to more potent drugs.

They are making money on this. They are making buckets, trucks and boatloads of money on this, and they are not suddenly going to say, oh, they legalized marijuana, I think we will quit. We will just retire.

I mean, give me a break. There is going to be violence because there is tremendous money; and to the degree we try to cut off the source of their money, they are going to continue to become more violent.

Another question that comes with this is, yes, but you have not stabilized any villages. I have heard my colleagues on the floor testify that they have been to villages where there still is not order.

We all know that. When you have a place in a country where people, judges are getting shot, mayors are getting shot, we have a president of Colombia whose father was assassinated, we have a vice president of Colombia who himself was kidnapped for 9 months, they know what it means.

Quite frankly, I was sitting there in the presidential palace along with the

gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) with the delegation for the inauguration of President Uribe, and we heard this big boom, and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) said I never heard a one-gun salute.

They blew off part of the corner of the presidential palace. They were trying to aim with their howitzer, blew up a housing complex, killed many innocent people, shot to the left, shot to the right. They did not care that there were thousands of troops around. They were shooting from a mile and a quarter away with sophisticated equipment. This is a tough battle, and they do not care who they hit. Even President Chavez, who you would think would have some connections, was in the building they were shooting at.

It is an equal-opportunity terrorist. They will hit anybody if they are trying to threaten their money. And we have to understand that this is not something you can just sit down and have a nice negotiation, maybe we can give them some trinkets and they will give us some trinkets and everybody will pat each other on the back and say, yeah, I will give up my \$3 billion business.

We have to establish order in those communities. The plan under Plan Colombia, quite frankly, is taking a little longer than we thought, because they have chosen to fight, because another myth is that it is a balloon: if you squeeze Colombia, it is going to go back to Peru and Bolivia. The truth is that that is hard.

We have made progress in those countries. Some seem to be coming back a little bit, but it is nothing like it was, and they are trapped.

In Colombia, if you look at this map, much of the progress is being made a long the Putumayo. If we squeeze in from the south, and this is a big coca region, the heroin is in the higher elevations. Those mountains, by the way, are up to 18,000 feet. I thought the topography here was important, because you can see most of the people are on this side of the mountain range. That side is the Amazon basin.

They kidnap and harass people and terrorize people on this side, but most of the growing is over there. And as we start to put the pressure on, they move more out in the jungle. This is not an easy task. When you fly over, you cannot see the stuff. And the coca fields are at least big. The heroin poppy, you cannot see it.

Furthermore, I have heard people say, well, they are spraying legitimate crops. Walk on the ground. They are smart. They can make more in coca than they can make in palm heart; and unless you convince them that you are going to provide stability and protection for them and there is going to be an alternative crop, they just grow it underneath.

We are spraying where there is evidence that there is coca or heroin poppy; but as they move further in the

jungle, you are farther and farther from any air base, you are farther and farther from re-fueling places, you are farther and farther from any roads. If you have a helicopter crash, guess what? They go in and capture your pilots, which they have right now with three Americans.

The farther out we go, they are going to get there. But the farther out they go, guess what? They are longer in the air and we can see them longer. They have more risk that we are going to interdict.

It is not true that we do not make progress by moving them. It just is that we are not going to eliminate the problem by moving it. We reduce the problem, we manage it. To the degree we reduce the amount of cocaine coming into the United States, we change the price and purity questions. They do not package it with marijuana as easily. It is watered down. It does not have the same potency. Addicts are not as difficult. You make step-by-step progress; you do not make huge progress.

Now, back to the villages. They have been able to establish a reasonable amount of order in about half the villages. The goal was to establish it in more than that.

Now what are some practical implications of that? Let me first show you something here. On the spraying of poppy crops, there is a discussion of why is this so hard to spray. First off, you have to hit it several times. Heroin poppy is one of the cases. They can replant it, so you need to do it multiple times a year.

But, do you know what? They try to shoot down those planes. This have taken more hits in the last couple weeks than they had in a long time, because they realize the more heroin poppy that we eradicate and the more coca we eradicate, the more they can predict where the planes are going to go for eradication, because there are fewer fields to eradicate. So they can take their armaments and focus better on where we are coming.

Another thing is that you have to have ground protection. My first trip there in 1996 and 1997 when we were doing some of this, I went out to one, I think it was in the Guaviare area, but I talked to some pilots whose concern was this: one of their partners had been killed because they would string up line that you could not see and their plane went through and it crossed their neck as they tried to eradicate.

□ 2200

So now you have groups of soldiers on the ground trying to protect the planes to eradicate.

A couple of other illustrations. You can see here when you are flying the plane over, you have people in the fields on all sides. In different countries we use different things. In Bolivia and Peru, some were ground eradication, some were air eradication, but in that effort, every place you went,

whether you are going after labs or field eradication, you have to be protected. As I have gone into the field and seen some of this, you have to be protected.

I want to illustrate one other point as to why this becomes important. There are somewhere in the vicinity of over 200,000 displaced people in Colombia. These people in these rural villages, as they are out in the villages, what started often is that the FARC will come in, they will say, grow coca. They can make a lot of money, they will bring the planes to it, and they will provide protection and forcibly push them into coca. Then the paramilitaries would come through their villages and say, you put up somebody from the FARC, you are cooperating with the FARC; we are going to kill you; we are going to terrorize you. Then the FARC would come back in town and say, you cooperated with the paramilitaries; we are going to kill you. And these poor villages just decide: I am not staying here. I do not care if my family has had a farm here for 100 years. I do not care if my family has had a business here. I do not want to get myself and my family killed.

We visited the Nelson Mandela village just outside of Cartagena. Mr. Speaker, 35,000 people live in basic shacks with these kinds of streets. Right now Indiana is flooding a lot, and it looks a little like this, but underneath there is actual, real streets. Here, it just turns into mud. AID has tried to develop some alternative development in this area. I had two, I do not think it was these two young girls, but two young girls came up to me and wanted to talk to a Congressman. I had drifted off from the group. I quick got back after they talked to me. But they said, even in this camp, the FARC is hunting them down, as are the paramilitaries, if they believe they cooperated with the other side. They go right in to where we have an AID plan where it might be 100 miles or 200 miles away from the village and terrorize them. The person I was with, the photographer and I decided we were going to go back to the rest of the group because we had not banked on them being in the same camp that we were.

But these kids deal with this every day. They cannot escape. They do not have the type of protection that a U.S. CODEL has, a congressional delegation, when we go in. They have to live with it. One young girl sang a song as opposed to just telling a story, sang a song about how she was in her home and the FARC came in and shot her husband right in front of her and her son, the little kids wandering around in this type of environment.

Now, part of the solution to that is, bluntly put, we can only do so many tar-paper shacks around the world. What we have to do is get their villages safe to the degree we can establish order and security in their villages. They did not want to leave their farms. They did not want to leave their busi-

nesses. Yes, some of them did not have employment and came to the cities. In Rio and in Lima and Buenos Aires and all over the world, you see at the edges of the cities some of this. But Colombia has a middle class. It is not Guatemala. It is not Venezuela. They have a relatively stable middle class and democracy.

The question is, how can we reestablish it? How do we do this? That is why we not only need at this point to finish off what we are doing in Plan Colombia and the Andean Initiative, we need to have the Europeans follow up with their commitment to help us now to get these people back to work and back to their villages if we can get those villages safe.

Now, another part of this is I met an amazing man. His name was Rudolfo Gedeon. He is president of PETCO. But he is doing one of the initiatives that has been so successful in Bangladesh, and that is microloans. In this pattern in Bangladesh, they gave little loans to try to build little capitalism that moves into a little bit bigger capitalism, that moves into a little bit more, because in so many of these countries you have the very wealthy people and the very poor people. In Medellin they started, and now they are doing in the Cartagena areas, a number of these businessmen working with AID are starting these loan processes with AID. Some AID capital, but the real success here is having local people be the monitors. Their loans, \$1.5 million, 8,000 loans over the last year; average loan, \$200, some a little bit bigger, some are \$60. But do my colleagues know what? Ninety-eight percent, two percent default rate. No bank anywhere has that, except in Bangladesh and a couple of these microloans, because they are the people themselves monitoring them.

Now, how does this relate to the broader question?

In this village AID has a project where they are teaching some people metal working, some people how to sew, how to bake, how to make crafts. So they teach them that. Where do they go? What are they supposed to do? Mr. Speaker, it is amazing: \$80, \$100 you can start to sew in your neighborhood. Pay that back, like a credit union, which is really kind of how this is functioning, because your neighbors are all part of this, and you are watching each other, and there is accountability. Then you can get justified for maybe a \$400 loan, then an \$800 loan. You crawl, you take baby steps, you walk, but that is how you build a middle class.

But to do that, you have to have order. Some people do not understand, you can not give somebody \$400 or \$10,000 or \$50,000 to start a business if they think their family is going to be murdered or kidnapped the next week.

Somehow, we have to establish order. We have to establish credible government units that are not involved in human rights violations, which this

government is committed to do. Some people say, well, I cannot make as much growing soybeans as I can selling coca or growing coca. I cannot make as much in palm heart. Do my colleagues know what? The kids on American street corners cannot make as much at McDonald's as they can being a lookout either, but that does not mean we are going to pay them \$400 an hour if they give up being a lookout. There are things that are not legal to do and that are destructive, and there are things that are legal. We need to work to give people a living wage, where they can work to support their family with their income, and we need to help the Government of Colombia, which has been undermined.

For example, they were the eighth largest supplier of oil in the world. There has been so much oil spilled in attacking that pipeline that it would be 8 *Exxon Valdezes* pouring into the north part of Colombia.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT).

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Indiana, my friend, who has demonstrated a commitment that is extraordinary in terms of this particular issue and to the people of Colombia. I hope that everyone that is watching tonight and listening to the gentleman's Special Order takes note.

Much of what the gentleman said, practically all of what the gentleman said I agree with. And I think it is important to understand that the commitment to Colombia has to be a sustained commitment. Unfortunately, those of us who enjoy the benefits of this country are sometimes susceptible to a lack of patience. This is not a problem that is going to go away overnight in Colombia, but I think that the gentleman made the link that absolutely cries for patience by the American people and by the Congress, and that is that here in the neighborhoods of the United States, there are young people and people of middle age that have been addicted to narcotics and have led lives that reduce them to hostages and prisoners in their own body. And if we are ever going to address that problem and the link that it has to crime and violence in the United States, our commitment has to be sustained.

I felt the need to say that. I know the gentleman has been on the floor. I am here with some colleagues to address a separate issue, but I want to applaud the gentleman's efforts. We have worked a long time on this particular issue, and I believe that the Colombian Government is making great strides. The gentleman pointed out that the Colombian Government is making strides in terms of human rights.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, as we near the 3-year anniversary of Plan Colombia, it is important to reaffirm our commitment to this program, to the people of Colombia, and to American citizens. I have led three congressional delegations to Colombia over the past 5 months. I can say firsthand that our significant investment is beginning to pay dividends. Together with the strong commitment of the Uribe Administration and historic levels of support from the Colombian people, U.S. involvement in Colombia is beginning to hit narco-terrorists where it hurts.

We are seeing tremendous results in illegal crop eradication, and Plan Colombia's efforts have produced record reductions in coca production and in the destruction of drug labs. Each week brings news of new seizures of cocaine and heroin—interdictions that are usually the result of U.S.-supplied intelligence. In fact, just this last weekend, Colombian officials seized over a ton of cocaine from a drug trafficking boat off the Caribbean coast. The Colombian government is reestablishing state presence in areas of the country that for decades lacked it. Criminals who have remained at bay for years are being captured and extradited to the United States for prosecution. During the 11 months of President Uribe's tenure, 68 individuals have been extradited from Colombia to the United States.

Mr. Speaker, Plan Colombia is working. I have just returned from a trip to Colombia with Chairman SOUDER and have seen first hand the devastation that drug production and trafficking has on this country. To those who question our investment, I would ask them to visit, as I have, Colombian soldiers who have lost their limbs or eyesight or sustained permanent disabilities in their battle to return peace to their nation and keep drugs off American streets. I would also ask them to visit Barrio Nelson Mandela, a USAID sponsored facility for internally displaced people who have been forced from their homes by drug traffickers and guerillas. This facility showed me how our work on behalf of Colombia's millions of internally displaced people is offering men, women, and children a second chance at a violence-free, productive life.

The United States, however, should not have to do this alone. An increasingly significant amount of Colombian cocaine and heroin is being trafficked through Europe for consumption. I would like to urge our European allies to recognize their responsibility to do their share in supporting Colombia in the battle to reduce the supply of drugs entering the world market. The war on drugs cannot be won without appropriate funds, resources and tools. Every contribution possible is needed to disrupt the market and make the drug trade less profitable. The battle going on in Colombia against narco-terrorism is Europe's battle as well. A European contribution to fighting the war on drugs could provide these innocent people with a better life by strengthening the rule of law, protecting human rights, and providing security for all Colombians.

During my recent visit to Colombia, it was evident to me just how effective U.S. assistance is to their government. Colombia's ability to combat both drugs and terror has been strengthened due in large part to our support as well as the will and determination of the Colombian people. With such promising results over the last 3 years, it is important to continue our support and sustain the momen-

tum. Goals are being met, and new goals need to be set. Of course obstacles remain, and progress is slower than we would like it to be. But now is not the time to turn our backs on this battle that is so intrinsically tied to our war on terrorism and illegal drug use. In light of the strong progress being made in Colombia, I urge all of my colleagues to continue their support of Colombia's unified campaign against narcotics trafficking and terrorist activities and their effort to bring democratic security to the country.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to offer some views as part of this evening's Special Order recognizing the third anniversary of Plan Colombia.

As a senior Member of the House Intelligence and Armed Services Committees, I wanted to take note of the significant gains that have been made since Plan Colombia was announced in July of 2000 in strengthening the rule of law and enhancing the stability of this important democratic ally. As important, the strategy set forth in Plan Colombia has achieved major positive results in initially slowing and now reducing Colombia's cocaine production during the past 3 years.

A recent U.S. Government assessment of global coca production trends notes the recent progress achieved under the Plan Colombia strategy: "Coca cultivation in Colombia (in 2002) declined by 15 percent—the first decline in Colombia's coca crop in a decade. . . . This reduction was largely because of a sustained aerial eradication campaign in what had been the country's densest coca growing areas. . . . Cultivation in the Putumayo—site of the country's most intensive eradication effort—declined by 80 percent." Nevertheless, the U.S. and Colombia Governments assessed in 2002 that Colombia's coca production zones totaled nearly 362,500 acres with the potential to produce 680 metric tons of pure cocaine.

With respect to Colombian heroin production, the latest assessment in that in 2002, Colombia's opium poppy production zones totaled some 12,200 acres with a potential yield of some 11.3 metric tons of pure heroin. According to the DEA, Colombian heroin captures approximately 70 percent of the U.S. marketplace and virtually all of Colombia's heroin production is intended for export to the United States. Unlike the aggressive strategies being applied against Colombia's coca production, the bilateral efforts to locate and eradicate opium poppy under Plan Colombia have lacked a consistent strategy and adequate resources and personnel. Both the U.S. and Colombian governments need to work much more effectively to apply new technologies to combat and defeat the heroin industry.

I wanted to briefly cite two initiatives that are elements of the Plan Colombia strategy, which have real potential to improve Colombia's security and to enhance the rule of law within Colombia's borders. With Plan Colombia funding, the United States Southern Command provided resources and training for the establishment of a Military Penal Justice Corps within the Colombian military. Since the establishment of Colombia's Military Penal Justice Corps in August 2000, over 300 military, police, and civilian attorneys have received professional legal education and training focused on military justice, international humanitarian law, and operational law. This legal training has had a direct and positive impact on the

Colombian military's performance in the field against terrorists and narco-traffickers as well as on its adherence to international legal standards in very difficult combat environments.

A second initiative under Plan Colombia is the reestablishment of the binational airbridge denial (ABD) program, which is designed to interdict illegal aircraft engaged in transporting narcotics. The ABD program merits close oversight, but it has real potential to reduce narco-trafficking and to limit illicit weapons support to terrorists and other criminal organizations in Colombia. When I was in Bogota last November, I had the opportunity to discuss this issue at some length with Colombian President Alvaro Uribe. President Uribe was very clear about the urgency of implementing the ABD program. I am concerned that legal disputes over the ABD program's implementation have delayed the renewal of this important interdiction program. I strongly urge the Bush administration to resolve any outstanding issues affecting ABD implementation immediately, and to provide the Colombian Government with the appropriate support to carry out an effective and accountable ABD program.

While these recent trends are somewhat encouraging, it is equally clear that our two governments need to maintain their focus on the Plan Colombia strategic objectives by intensifying ongoing narcotics eradication and interdiction programs, and by restoring security and essential government services to areas threatened by terrorists and narco-traffickers. I am convinced that Colombia's fight is also our fight—as the terrorism and the narco-trafficking that are destabilizing Colombia's democratic institutions pose real threats to America's people and our national security.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to contribute to this evening's Special Order commemorating the third anniversary of Plan Colombia.

As Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, I wanted to discuss the significant and measurable progress that has been made in the past 3 years in Colombia on a variety of fronts as a product of improved coordination and bilateral cooperation between the governments of Colombia and the United States.

Four years ago, the security situation within Colombia was extremely unstable—some were saying that Colombia was unraveling into a failed state where the national government exercised control of less than 50 percent of its territory. Leftist guerrillas from the FARC and the ELN and rightist paramilitary groups were growing rapidly and expanding their reach throughout much of Colombia. These terrorist groups were financed by the surge in cocaine and heroin production in the unsecured areas of Colombia as well as by other widespread criminal activities, such as mass kidnappings, extortion, murder for hire, and money laundering. The rule of law in much of Colombia during that time was uncertain at best; judges, public defenders, prosecutors, and police were being terrorized and killed at unprecedented rates. The political, economic and security future of Colombia was clearly and increasingly at stake.

Given Colombia's economic and political importance as a major democratic ally within our Hemisphere, it was critical that Colombia and its friends jointly develop and fund an effort to enhance Colombia's security, strengthen the

rule of law, interdict and eradicate narcotic crops, and grow its economy. During the past 3 years, the Plan Colombia initiative has provided a comprehensive strategy to reassert government control of Colombia's territory as well as to restore public confidence in the viability of Colombia's democratic institutions. Since the inauguration of Colombian President Alvaro Uribe in August 2002, the Colombian Government has stepped up its implementation of a wide variety of Plan Colombia programs affecting narcotics eradication and interdiction, enhanced law enforcement and other security-related measures, and alternative development efforts.

A recent United Nations study estimates that Colombian coca production has been reduced by 40 percent since Plan Colombia was begun. With the strong support of President Uribe and improved mobility and capacity of Colombia's military and police forces, there is an excellent opportunity in 2003 for our bi-national coca eradication program to eradicate 100 percent of Colombia's coca production zones, an area that encompasses over 150,000 hectares. While this is very good news in the short term, our two governments will have to pursue this nationwide eradication and interdiction strategy for at least the next several years as coca growers are forced out of their illegal business and the Colombian Government is able to establish a stable and effective security presence in numerous coca production zones across Colombia.

While the coca eradication trends show promise, I am concerned that insufficient attention has been given to developing and implementing an effective strategy to locate and eradicate Colombia's opium poppy crop. Our latest U.S. Government poppy crop data estimates that Colombia produced 14.2 metric tons of export quality heroin in 2002; virtually all of this Colombian heroin was exported to the United States and represented the large majority of all heroin consumed by Americans in 2002.

Despite the clear statutory direction and funding guidance in both Plan Colombia and in related Congressional authorizations and appropriations measures during the past 5 years, our bilateral effort against Colombian heroin has been so far insufficient. Given the lethal effects of the heroin trade on both our countries, this key element of Plan Colombia demands senior-level attention by both governments, appropriate resources, and the application of a new, more effective mix of eradication and interdiction technologies to locate and kill the opium poppy on the 12,000–15,000 hectares where it has been grown in Colombia's high Andes mountains.

Plan Colombia has registered some notable successes in the past 3 years. We need to stay committed to this important fight with our Colombian allies—not just for our national security, but for the safety of countless Americans who are threatened by the linkages between narco-trafficking and international terrorism. We need to redouble our efforts to stem the production and export of heroin and coca from Colombia, which harm and kill thousands of Colombians and Americans every year.

I commend the leadership of Speaker HASTERT in this important national security initiative. It was his foresight and concerted effort that has brought us this far. I look forward to working with the Speaker on this effort, and

continuing to build upon the success of Plan Colombia as it enters its fourth year.

NATIONAL POLICIES IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) is recognized for 60 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on and to include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, we are here this evening to talk about Iraq, to talk about the military activity, to talk about the weapons of mass destruction, to talk about the postconflict steps that have been taken and need to be taken. I am joined this evening by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT), and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL), and perhaps others, to talk for the next hour about our national policies in Iraq.

Some of us, myself included, voted in favor of the military authority requested by the President to invade Iraq. Some of us who will be speaking tonight voted against that military authority. But all of us have some common questions. We all salute the brave and courageous efforts by our young men and women in uniform. They won a very impressive military victory in short order. That military victory was never in doubt, but it was impressive nonetheless how well our troops performed.

But there are two questions, really: Is our military mission completed in Iraq? And secondly, are we winning the peace?

Now, I would suggest, just to get the conversation started this evening, that first off, our military mission is not complete, because we have not found the weapons of mass destruction. Those weapons are what motivated me to vote in favor of this military authority, because I believed then and I believe now that it was necessary to disarm Saddam Hussein of weapons of mass destruction. But if we cannot find those weapons of mass destruction, there are serious questions. And we need a full accounting, first, of where those weapons are so that we know they are secured or dismantled and in safe custody. Secondly, we need a full accounting of how accurate our intelligence was. Were our intelligence agencies accurate in the information they gave to the administration? Was that information properly used by the administration?

And this is not just an academic exercise. The entire Bush doctrine of the

preemptive use of force requires as a foundation accurate intelligence regarding the intentions of other countries and potential enemies around the world. If we are going to use force preemptively in the face of imminent threats to this country or to our allies, we have to know that our intelligence is accurate.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOEFFEL. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I would just simply add one other item that I would hope that tonight we can discuss and that our friend from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) has really, in my judgment, done an extraordinary job in terms of laying out for the American people what it is going to cost the taxpayers of the United States and the impact in terms of service cuts for Americans that that will entail.

But if for a moment I could just simply go to the issue that the gentleman from Pennsylvania raised about the issue of weapons of mass destruction.

It certainly is well-known that the two premises for the rationale for the military attack on Iraq as articulated by the President was, number one, links between the Saddam Hussein regime and the possession of weapons of mass destruction, coupled with an intent to use them by that regime that presented a clear and present danger to the United States and to our people. Since the end of the conflict, we no longer hear about links between al Qaeda and the regime of the tyrant Saddam Hussein. In fact, I would dare say there is a consensus now that there was no evidence to indicate any collaborative effort or any cooperation between Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, and, most likely, the opposite was true.

I am sure the gentleman from Pennsylvania remembers and I know the gentleman from Illinois took note of the fact that about, I think it was in April of 2001, there was a report that Mohammed Atta, the ringleader of September 11, met with a senior Iraqi intelligence agent in the Czech Republic.

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It was later revealed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation that that could not have happened because Mr. Atta at the time of the alleged meeting was here in the United States plotting against the American people. No longer do we hear about links between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. So that argument proved to be false and inaccurate.

Mr. HOEFFEL. If I could reclaim my time for a moment just to point out that the gentleman is pointing out that the Bush administration has a growing credibility gap regarding its prior claims and the evidence that is forthcoming after the conflict. And I know the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) was the first on